

Farmington Observer

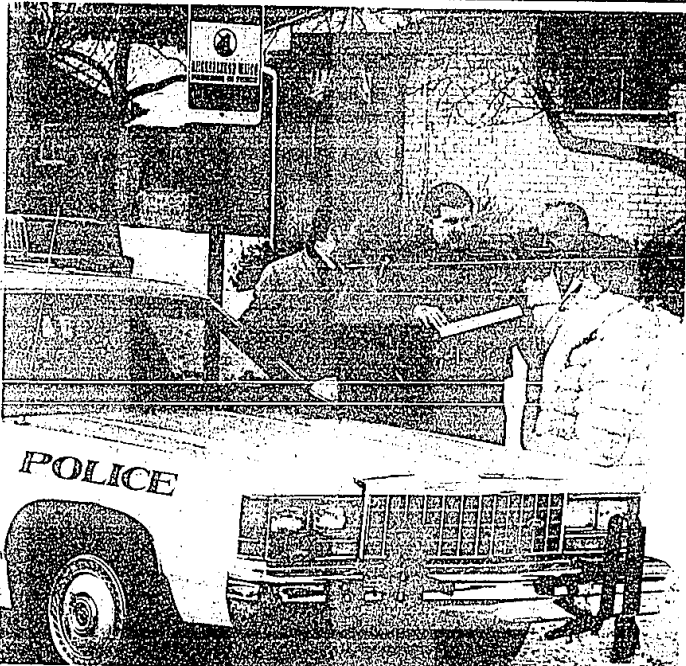
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Joseph Schornack of Farmington's Public Safety Department advises Pete Kulbaba (left), Harry

Farris and Verna Kulbaba on their Neighborhood Watch program on Lamar Street.

RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Criminals, take note: 'We're watching you'

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

When residents posted Neighborhood Watch signs along Lamar in Farmington, they were giving clear warning to criminals: "Stay out. You are being watched."

"They're saying, 'Hey, bad guy or potential bad guy, if you do bad in this neighborhood, we're going to call the police,'" said Detective Charles Lee of the Farmington Department of Public Safety, who helped Lamar residents form the Neighborhood Watch program — the first in Farmington.

'They should call on anything suspicious or out of the ordinary. We will respond.'

— Charles Lee
public safety department

Initially, residents on Lamar got together to just clean up the neighborhood, said Verna Kulbaba, one of the driving forces behind the watch program.

But "people got to share their ideas," decided what they wanted their neigh-

borhood to be and Neighborhood Watch was born, Kulbaba said.

"The purpose was to give a better image to the area," she said. "The funny thing is that it brought people closer together."

IN FACT, 80 percent of the residents on Lamar, from Orchard Lake to Marblehead, attended the first of two meetings required to form the watch program.

"Thirty-nine of the fifty-nine people showed up to organize," Kulbaba said. "So you know the interest was high."

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Firefighters get pay boost

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

A recently negotiated three-year labor contract for Farmington Hills' 11 full-time firefighters will cost taxpayers approximately \$24,000 for increased wages.

In the first year of the new agreement, firefighters will immediately receive a 3-percent increase retroactive to last July 1 and a 2-percent increase retroactive to Jan. 1, 1984. The net effect of the increase from July 1983 to July 1984 is a 4-percent increase, said William Costick, assistant city manager.

For firefighters who are at the top of

the salary scale, the first-year increase means a jump from \$24,258 to \$25,027, Costick said.

In July 1984, firefighters will receive another 3-percent wage increase followed by an additional 3-percent hike in January 1985. These increases together amount to a net increase in cost to the city of 4.5 percent.

In July 1985, firefighters will receive a straight 5-percent increase.

"This is the first multiyear contract we have proposed," Costick said, adding that generally the firefighters have had one-year contracts.

But this year, Costick said, the decision was made to negotiate a three-

year agreement because most of the procedural items of the contract, such as vacations and holidays are "pretty smoothly functioning."

The firefighters' contract expired in June 1983 unlike the contracts which were reopened last year to readjust salaries for the city's three other labor organizations.

In addition to approving the firefighters' contract last week, the Farmington Hills City Council in December approved renegotiated agreements with the Police Officers Association of Michigan, the Teamsters and AFSCME (American, State, Federal and County Municipal Employees) Local 1458.

Teacher who 'always liked school' to retire

By Tom Baer
staff writer

At age 5, Elaine Ettinger made a career decision — she would become a school teacher.

"I made up my mind when I was a little girl, and I've never changed it," said Ettinger, who's been pursuing that career for 32 years.

Now a third-grade teacher at Eagle Elementary School in the Farmington

district, Ettinger will retire at the end of this month after 22 years in the system.

"As I recall my mother's story, I wanted to go to school before I was old enough," she said. "I sort of drove her crazy about that."

"I liked school. I always have enjoyed learning and reading and doing the things you do in school. I guess that's why I wanted to be a teacher."

— Elaine Ettinger
retiring teacher

After spending 10 years in the Detroit Public Schools, Ettinger came to Farmington to take a post at Middlebelt Elementary School. She spent five

years there and then taught 12 years at Fairview Elementary (she was there when it opened in 1966 and at the closing in '78) and five at Eagle.

Asked what she would miss most about teaching after she calls it quits, Ettinger said, "Well, I enjoy children. It's been a pleasure working with the

children, and I'll miss seeing them grow and develop."

But Ettinger, who lives in Oak Park with her husband Robert, said she

won't miss "... getting up in the morning and coming out in the cold."

AFTER RETIREMENT, Ettinger plans "to write a couple of books" and perform volunteer work transporting and checking on homebound senior citizens.

She'll also be assisting her husband, a retired teacher, with his favorite activity — cryonics, the practice of freezing a person's body at death in order to preserve it for possible future resurrection.

"Our interests in it are all non-profit," Ettinger said. "I say 'our' because I do work with him. That's part of what I'll be doing too. I won't be doing the actual freezing, though. I'm not the scientist; he is."

Asked if she plans to be frozen when she dies, Ettinger replied, "Definitely ... both of us ... the whole family."

The Ettingers have two grown children, David, 32, and Shelley, 29.

Elaine Ettinger was born in Detroit and has spent most of her life in the area. A graduate of Detroit Central High School, she holds an undergraduate degree from Wayne State University and a master's from Indiana University.

Ettinger taught high school in Detroit, serving a stint as the drama coach at the old Northeastern High. Most of the rest of her career was spent with younger children, however.



Teacher Elaine Ettinger: "You can't throw them out. You have to try to help them develop and overcome problems."

RANDY BORST/staff photographer

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Hearing set for cable TV study Dispute continues

The Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission will review cable consultant Harold Horn's long-awaited study determining whether the MetroVision cable-TV firm has lived up to ordinance requirements in building the tri-city cable franchise system at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday at the Farmington City Hall.

Horn's compliance study was requested by the six-member commission in response to a dispute between MetroVision and residents in less densely populated neighborhoods who were told they could not receive cable TV unless they paid a \$250-\$500 installation fee.

The dispute, made public by angry residents in Farmington Hills' Power and 11 Mile neighborhood in early October, concerns who will pay for the installation of cable and whether some residents in the less-populated neighborhoods of the tri-city franchise area will get cable at all.

Under MetroVision's "line extension policy," customers may be charged for cable installation in areas

which have fewer than 30 houses in a linear mile.

MetroVision officials have claimed the issue is economic because average overhead for cable construction is about \$12,000 for every mile of cable. The problem, for example, with the Power Road neighborhood, is that there aren't enough households along the cable route so the cable firm will lose money if the lines are laid free of charge.

Residents in populated areas have received cable free.

Although Farmington Hills residents are the loudest in their criticism of MetroVision, residents in Novi, an even more sparsely populated community, also are affected by MetroVision's "line extension" policy.

Subscribers in Farmington, however, are unaffected by installation fees because the neighborhoods meet the cable firm's density requirements.

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